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Spiritual Intelligence on Leadership Effectiveness and Food-Hygiene Practices in Public Institutions

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Abstract

Holistic View of food service business performance is a rather new phenomenon. Constraints such as a diverse workforce and the high worker turnover have caused subsequent adverse effects on the foodservice performance. The present study suggests an effort through Holistic View of spiritual intelligence (SQ) to address the problem of quality of food served by the food handlers. A total of 210 food handlers from the public institutions in East Malaysia were surveyed. The study used Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the model and hypotheses. Implications of the findings, guidelines for future research, and the limitations were also discussed.

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Keywords: A holistic view; leadership effectiveness; food-hygiene practices; foodservice performance

1. Introduction

The fundamental principle of the food service institutions is to benefit the customers by providing quality and expected a taste of food and outstanding service in a relaxed atmosphere. An exceptional food service business is not only offering affordable foods that people of all income levels can purchase, but also contribute to social

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benefits. Furthermore, it has significant potential to support small and middle-sized local farmers and food-processing operations within the region.

Food service institutions in the hospitality industry are referring to catering businesses. The meals business is not necessarily carried out by the owner of the premises but for some institutions. Examples of common institutional food services are skilled nursing facilities, regular day-care, senior housing, hospitals, intermediate care facilities, and military. Due to the emergence of needs and demands, people's healthy life style has been developed. We need food that tastes good, but most importantly it has been cooked by food handlers that are reliable to address the needs of preparing healthy meals with minimum supervisions. Food handlers who are reliable at work tend to foster healthy working environment and would generate a better commitment in work teams although in the absence of the supervisors.

1.1. Problems in foodservice institutions

In Malaysia, the constraints facing the food service institutions have often been to deal with a diverse workforce. The current workforce is becoming more heterogeneous with mixed people in terms of gender, age, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Furthermore, easier entry of foreign workers through temporary employment pass inflates the diversity of workers in the low-wage segment. The scenario of foreign workers can be seen everywhere in Malaysia, particularly the influences from foreign countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. The availability of temporary employment pass as work permits, for instance, has been a ticket for the foreign workers to work in unskilled sectors. Besides, the workforces in the food service institutions receive flat wages for all levels of education. It can be said that most of them are working for a living, not because of qualifications and passion for working in the food business.

As a result, it has led to greater challenges in the employee turnover. At the average level, temporary workers are not interested in working for a long term at one place and have no interest in the job. Rather they work just to earn a living. Therefore, it is not impossible that they are more inclined to leave for a stable income and ready to move to a new job that is more promising.

Food purveyors are also facing other significant issues while running a business. The problems include sources of raw materials and the quality of the food supply, the food preparation is not by the standards, existing infrastructure deprived, and weak supervision. These situations arise because the food handlers are not competent. Subsequently leading to a linked sequence of events produced adverse effects towards the quality of food in the food service establishments. Rapid changes in the supply of the workforce and demand to maintain food safety added to common deficiencies in the food service business.

Hence, the current study is timely, given that Malaysian food service institutions have been experiencing unhealthy phenomena. The study is now to resort to a Holistic View of the SQ as a resource from within an individual to be flexible working in a chaos situation. The study looks at the impact of two factors, namely Leadership Effectiveness and Food-Hygiene Practice and its implication on the Holistic View of the SQ. Moreover, the Holistic View was also proposed to gauge a relationship with the Foodservice Performance. Precisely, the current study aimed at the trait of wholeness and oneness in the Holistic View, among the food handlers. The main objective was to deal with extreme difficulties in many businesses' phenomena in the food service institutions.

This paper is organized to include relevant literature reviews, hypotheses testing, methodology, results, and discussions. The implications of the findings, limitations, conclusion, and future research are also discussed.

2. Literature review

The literature review section provides scholarly papers from various disciplines to include the current knowledge of the topic of interest. Subsequently, the presented literature reviews lead to the causal relationships between the highlighted study's variables. This paper develops hypothesis testing in speculating upon the outcome of the present study.

2.1. *Spiritual intelligence*

This paper builds on the current SQ literature based on the association of the concept of emotional intelligence (EQ) with success in performance. EQ with the intelligence abilities and skills controlling personality effects has extended to another subset of social intelligence, which is SQ (Mazni, Toh, Mohamed Azam, & Siti Khadijah, 2014). SQ comprises of intangible inner attributes or deep awareness of oneself. Within the workplace, as explained by Marques (2005), SQ is the deepest inner resources to care, and it is the power to tolerate and adapt. The person who has the SQ is often has a developed clear and stable sense of self-identity in the shifting workplace. The person also able discern the real meaning of events and circumstances, and able to make the work more meaningful. The SQ has to bring into the workplace because it helps to identify and align personal values with a clear purpose for lasting organizational excellence. The person with high SQ is also able to understand and influence the exact cause. Hence, considering the organizational impact when the employees adopted the SQ, the SQ can result in the ability to focus and stay calm and be a selfless and altruistic attitude towards others. The SQ also builds relationships and interpersonal understanding and managing change and removing the roadblocks (George, 2006). In other words, SQ can be the foundation for healthy relationships that leads a person to carry out the task beyond the facts and functions of the job (Kumar & Bhasin, 2014). The SQ, according to Zohar and Marshall (2001) is the soul's intelligence, which we heal ourselves and make ourselves whole.

2.2. *A holistic view*

Human history has shown that people often find meaning and purpose in life. These objectives are sought for the devotion in daily life. Accordingly, the man found God through faith and devotion to the one true God. Belief in God and slavery stance was incorporated in life and formed self-characteristics of an individual. For the faith, the strength of spirit, and positive thinking, appreciation of the religious had been incarnated as a new value called SQ. Hence, the spiritual knowledge introduces a Holistic View of the functions of a totality including perceptions, cognitions, plans, values, goals, motives, biological factors, conduct, and many other aspects of an individual (Magnusson & Torestad, 1993). According to Magnusson and Torestad (1993), religious identity in someone can make a person work independently without close supervision, intentional, and active being. Besides, a person who are willing to do something to get rewards only from God always has to perform and strive to very best and utmost without thinking of other interests such as recognition and in monetary values.

Scholars argued the term of spirituality and religion often confused people, but the concept of the religion presents absolute realities in life (Gupta, Kumar, & Singh, 2014). Compared to spiritual, literatures debated that the religion has narrower the concept that relates to behaviors, tends to be rigid, and sometimes it simply has no clear evidence to link to ethics (Fry, 2003). Nevertheless, religion as part of SQ have been connected continuously to solve problems (Kadkhoda & Jahani, 2012; Lewis, Ritchie, & Bates, 2011; McAdams, 2011; Rostami & Gol, 2014; Vayalilkarottu, 2012).

3. **Hypotheses testing**

The section of hypotheses testing provides rational decisions about the reality of effects on the current research. As such, three hypotheses were developed to define the path and direction of the current study, as well as to give a proper conclusion.

3.1. *Food-hygiene practice and holistic view*

There is evidence in the literature that attempts to link hygiene practice to a Holistic View. In a study of investigating physician defiance towards hand hygiene, Mortell, Balkhy, Tannous, and Jong (2013) found that the hand hygiene compliance will only improve on evidence-based as shown by the example among healthcare professionals and providers. A belief in the religion that used as a practice of therapy for late-life anxiety demonstrated substantial improvement in worry symptoms among the older adults (Barrera, Zeno, Bush, Barber, & Stanley, 2012). Rationally, practices in the context of food-hygiene can be considered to complement one's faith.

Food purveyors should promote safe and healthy food through proper practices as lapses in hygiene practices. In most cases, it is due to carelessness, oversights, and lackadaisical attitudes (Mazni, Toh, Mohd Faiz Foong, & Norazmir, 2013). If this is the case, the elements of Food-Hygiene Practice should be encouraged, having a positive relationship with Holistic View.

H1: Food-Hygiene Practice has an impact on a Holistic View

3.2. Leadership effectiveness and holistic view

Recently, many new studies addressed the importance of the intelligence capacity in managing capabilities. However, the leadership effectiveness was found not significantly related to EQ when tested in Australian educational institutions (Grunes, Gudmundsson, & Irmer, 2014). Moreover, Ronay and Carney (2013), found that testosterone's negatively related to empathic accuracy and perceived leadership ability. However, 87 scholars and researchers have linked the leadership elements of spirituality for management practitioners (Dent, Higgins, & Wharff, 2005). Although these studies were investigating the spiritual value of the leaders, the current study would examine the leadership effectiveness from the perception of the subordinates. Likewise, the past literature highlighted that Perceived Leadership Effectiveness is positively related to the Holistic View.

H2: Perceived Leadership Effectiveness has an impact on a Holistic View

3.3. Holistic view and food performance

Food Performance measurement is crucial because it helps a manager to assess the extent to which performance of the company is doing over time, and how do they compare to other businesses in the same industry. As literature claim that the intelligence from the religion and spirituality play significant roles in the performance, the present study would like to test the relationship in the context of food performance. A Holistic View of the top managers was found the strongest effects among the SQ components tested on financial performance in Turkish organizations (Ayranci, 2011). Similarly, the SQ had a significant positive impact on the service quality of a Counseling Center in Tehran (Rostami & Gol, 2014). In terms of food, Eliasi and Dwyer (2002) linked the religious observances on dietary food intakes that have been strong in traditions and guidelines of Judaism and Islam. To some extent, Hindus, Buddhism, Sikhism, or Church of the Latter Day Saints and Seventh-Day Adventists also have special dietary laws or practices in the food dietary.

The literature indicates that there are connections to view the religious value on performance; thus, the same could be expected in the present study:

H3: Holistic View has in impact on Food Performance

4. Research methodology

The questionnaire survey in the present study adopted the 6-point Likert scale. Items on “1” mean “never” and “6” means “always.” The 6-point Likert scale is preventing respondents to choose midpoints, clarifying their positions on the study's variable items. Even-numbered Likert scales lead the response to set at a certain point (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011). Items in the Holistic View are adapted from Ayranci (2011), which refer to a connection with nature, the ability to see problems as a whole, and the recognition that everything is integrated. The Holistic View is one of identified component for Integrated Spiritual Intelligence Scale (ISIS). Food-Hygiene Practices are represented by items used in a study by Bolton, Meally, Blair, McDowell, and Cowan (2008). The items are cross-checked with the Self Examination Programme (SELF), which developed by the Ministry of Health Malaysia. Meanwhile, question items for Leadership Effectiveness are adapted from Yukl (2008), and Food Performance is from Kleynhans (2003). The judgmental sampling was chosen to generalize the findings to the relevant criteria of the present study.

Holistic View of food service business performance is a rather new phenomenon where relationships between the indicators have to be modeled in the reflective measurement method. As such, the present study used Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0 as a statistical technique to test the model and hypotheses. Importantly, the PLS was used because the statistical mean abilities to help with smaller sample size even with non-normal distributed input data. The PLS is also able to handle both reflective and formative constructs and suitable for theory development and useful for predictions.

5. Data analysis and results

The research model in this study used the PLS analysis, the SmartPLS 3.0 software and two-step analysis approach (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2014). This study follows the recommendation of two-stage analytical procedures by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The test of the measurement model (validity and reliability of the measures) follows an examination of the structural model for the testing of the hypothesized relationship. The application is consistent with the views of Joseph F. Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014), T. Ramayah, Lee, and Boey (2011), and T. Ramayah, Yeap, and Ignatius (2013). The study used a bootstrapping method of 500 resamples to test the significance of the path coefficients and the loadings (Gholami, Sulaiman, Ramayah, & Molla, 2013). As shown in Table 1, the usable of 210 data revealed that respondents from the East Malaysia are slightly dominant by female (54%); about 80% of them are below 40 years old. The majority of them are working on a permanent and contract basis, and they engaged in the work for more than 8 hours in a day. The data has also indicated that although more than 80% has been working less than five years, the majority of them has attended the food handling course and had typhoid immunization.

Table 1. Profile of respondents.

Demographics	Categories	Frequency	Valid %
By State	Sabah	119	56.7
	Sarawak	91	43.3
Gender	Male	97	46.2
	Female	113	53.8
Age	Below 18	7	3.5
	19 to 30	106	53.3
	31 to 40	38	19.1
	41 to 50	33	16.6
	Above 50	15	7.5
	Missing	11	
Religion	Islam	145	69.4
	Others	64	30.6
	Missing	1	
Qualification	College/University	13	6.2
	Secondary School	158	75.6
	Primary School	30	14.3
	Others	8	3.8
	Missing	1	
Job Status	Permanent	48	23.1
	Contract	133	63.9
	Part Time	27	13.0
	Missing	2	
Working Hours	Less than 8 hours	13	6.2
	Between 8 and 10	146	69.9
	Above 10 hours	50	23.8
	Missing	1	
Working Experience	Less than a year	69	37.3

	Between 1 and 5	82	44.3
	Between 6 and 10	19	10.3
	Above 10 years	15	8.1
	Missing	25	
Food Handling Course	Agree	203	97.6
	Disagree	5	2.4
	Missing	2	
Typhoid Immunization	Yes	175	85.8
	No	29	14.2
	Missing	6	

Note. n=210; items are based on 6-point Likert-type scale (1= “never” to 6= “always”)

5.1. Measurement model

As a measurement model’s procedure, convergent validity looks for correlation with other alternative measures of the same construct. Convergent validity is the degree to which multiple items measuring the same concept are in agreement (Ramayah and Rahbar, 2013). The convergence validity of the measurement is usually ascertained by examining the loadings, the average variance extracted and also the composite reliability (Gholami et al. 2013). The loadings were all higher than 0.5; the composite reliability were all higher than 0.7, and the AVE was also greater than 0.5 as suggested in the literature (see Table 2). Later, this study inspected the discriminant validity of the measures, i.e. the extent to which items differentiate among constructs or measure distinct concepts (Ramayah and Rahbar 2013). Further, the study also observed the recommendation of by Gholami et al. (2013) by comparing the correlations between constructs and the square root of the average variance extracted for that construct. As presented in Table 3, all the square root of the AVE was higher than the correlations values in the row and a column indicating adequate discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981). Hence, all model evaluation criteria have been met and supported for its measures’ reliability and validity.

Table 2. Results of the measurement model.

Construct	Item	Loadings	AVE ^a	CR ^b
Food-Hygiene Practices	Cutting board	0.599	0.538	0.872
	Dented	0.858		
	Gloves	0.780		
	Headcover	0.860		
	Work when sick	0.696		
	Towel	0.547		
Leadership Effectiveness	Contribution	0.744	0.609	0.860
	Decision	0.911		
	Problem solver	0.630		
	Reflection	0.810		
Holistic View	Closeness	0.700	0.639	0.875
	Religious	0.889		
	Religious activities	0.867		
	Religious book	0.723		
Leadership Effectiveness	Contribution	0.744	0.609	0.860
	Decision	0.911		
	Problem solver	0.630		
	Reflection	0.810		
Holistic View	Closeness	0.700	0.639	0.875
	Religious	0.889		
	Religious activities	0.867		
	Religious book	0.723		
Food Performance	Food presentation	0.822	0.550	0.859

Food temperature	0.699
Menu	0.686
Quality	0.668
Tasty	0.820

Notes: Sink, Watch, and Needs were deleted due to low loadings

^a Average variance extracted (AVE) = (summation of the square of the factor loadings)/(summation of the square of the factor loadings) + (summation of the error variances)

^b Composite reliability (CR) = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (square of the summation of the error variances)

Table 3. Discriminant validity of constructs.

Discriminant validity of constructs	Food Service Performance	Food-Hygiene Practices	Holistic-View	Perceived Leadership Effectiveness
Food Service Performance	0.742			
Food-Hygiene Practice	0.094	0.733		
Holistic View	0.247	0.149	0.799	
Perceived Leadership Effectiveness	0.526	0.132	0.275	0.780

Notes: Diagonal elements are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) between the constructs and their measures. Off-diagonal elements are correlations between constructs. For discriminant validity, diagonal elements should be larger than off-diagonal elements in the same row and column.

5.2. Structural model

The structural model shows the causal relationships among constructs in the model (path coefficients and the R^2 value). Together, the R^2 and the path coefficients (beta and significance) indicate how well the data supported and hypothesized a model (Chin 1998; Ramayah et al. 2011; Sang et al. 2010). Table 4 and Figure 1 show the results of the structural model from the PLS output. Perceived Leadership Effectiveness was positively related to Holistic View ($R^2 = 0.088$, $\beta = 0.260$, $p < 0.01$) and Holistic View was positively related to Food Performance ($R^2 = 0.061$, $\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.01$). These findings support H2 and H3 of this research.

On the other hand, Food-Hygiene Practice ($\beta = 0.114$, $p > 0.05$) was not a significant predictor of Holistic View. Thus, H1 is not supported. All the variables explained 6.1% of the variance in Food Performance. A closer look showed that the most significant predictors are Leadership Effectiveness and Holistic View.

Next Q^2 via the blindfolding procedure was a test to measure a predictive relevance. To evaluate the predictive validity of large models, it is essential to compute the value of the model's predictive relevance (Q^2). This value pertains to the combination of cross validation and function fitting techniques. The approach taken is that predicting observables is more significant than estimating constructs, which are mainly artificial. This method omits a part of the data for a particular block of indicators during parameter estimations and then attempts to estimate the omitted part using the estimated parameters (Chin 2010). Chin (2010) also suggests that the omission distance can be any number from 5 to 10 as long as the sample is large. As proposed by Fornell and Cha (1994), a $Q^2 > 0$ implies the model has predictive relevance whereas $Q^2 < 0$ represents a lack of predictive relevance. It is possible for this study to use the blindfolding procedure to calculate the cross-validated communality (cv-comm) and cross-validated redundancy (cv-red). However, Chin (2010) suggests that one would use the cross-validated redundancy measure to examine the predictive relevance of one's theoretical/structural model. Thus, the current study calculates the cross-validate redundancy for two endogenous constructs Holistic View and Food Performance (see Figure 1). As shown in Table 5, the Q^2 values are 0.027 and 0.044 respectively indicating the model has predictive relevance because it is greater than zero.

Table 4. Summarizes the results of hypotheses testing in this model.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	Std Error	t-value	Decision
H1	Food-Hygiene Practices→Holistic View	0.114	0.158	0.723	Not Supported
H2	Perceived Leadership Effectiveness→Holistic View	0.260	0.065	3.992***	Supported
H3	Holistic View→Food Service Performance	0.247	0.065	3.783***	Supported

Notes: *** $p < 0.01$ (2.33), ** $p < 0.05$ (1.645), * $p < 0.1$ (1.28); (based on the one-tailed test)

Table 5. Blindfolding result: cv-communality and cv-redundancy.

Block	cv – Communality H^2	cv- Redundancy F^2
Food Performance	0.523	0.027
Holistic View	0.407	0.044

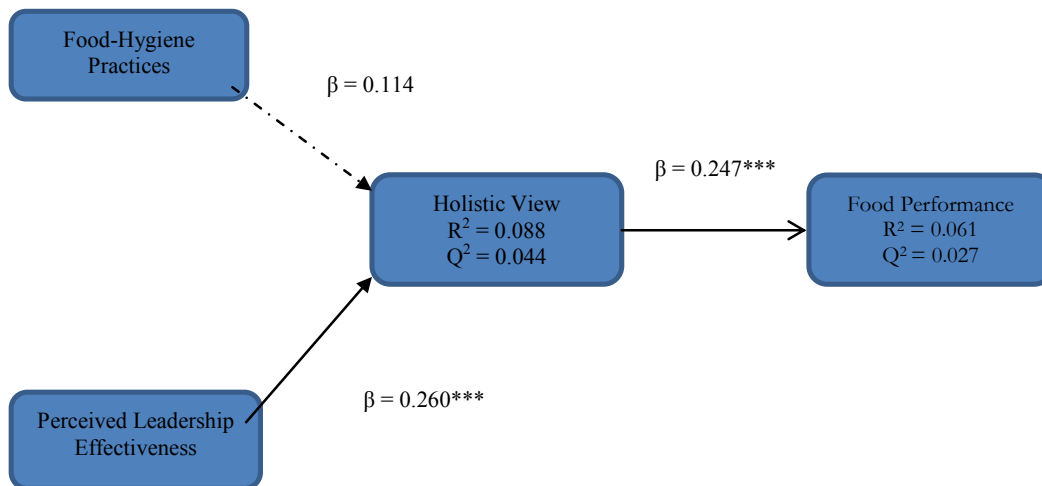


Fig. 1. Hypothesis testing results.

6. Implications of the study

The study explores a Holistic View of a person working in food service business and the causal relationship of this value to Food Performance, Leadership Effectiveness, and Food-Hygiene Practice, respectively. A Holistic View items in the current study have high reliability and consistent with Ayranci (2011). Constantly, Holistic View has also a positive and significant relationship with the performance as postulated in present study's hypothesis. As expected from the SQ and leadership literature reviews, e.g. Dent et al. (2005), the Holistic View also turned out positive and is significantly related to Perceived Leadership Effectiveness. The Holistic View from the SQ was, however, contradicting to the findings of Grunes et al. (2014).

Given that the role of food handlers are crucial in determining efficiency of food service operations, the focus of the study was to examine the independent causal relationship of a Holistic View and Food Performance and also the Perceived Leadership Effectiveness as well as Food Performance. The overall results show that, on the one hand, it is important for the food handlers to think positive towards the way the immediate superior supervising them. The way food handlers think and behave are crucial because it has an impact on the wholeness of each food handler. Similarly, the characteristics of oneself within each food handler can mark a competitive advantage through Food Performance. On the other hand, the Holistic View amongst the food handlers, however, was unable to be affected by the Food-Hygiene practice. Food purveyors, who are the decision makers in the food service operation, should take into account all these recommendations. Food-Hygiene Practices may also implicate other SQ components such as self-consciousness, high-consciousness, and challenge.

The originality of this paper is developed, based on from the viewpoint of front-line employees in the food service business. The paper aims to see the incorporation of the values of Holistic View to deal with the complexity of the food business.

7. Limitations

Some limitations of the study are worth noting. The presented empirical results were based on data collection from the public institutions. Another limitation of the study is the use of a cross-sectional design via self-reporting at the individual level. Besides, the study is perceive-based data; meaning food handlers measured the Leadership Effectiveness of the immediate supervisor and Food Performance on behalf of the consumers.

8. Conclusion and future research

This study initially shed light on how the food service institutions benefit the customers' needs, the cause of the needs in the institutional food service. This paper highlighted problems faced by these businesses. Based on the tested relationship, this study concludes that the Perceived Leadership Effectiveness of the immediate superior play significant role in the holistic value amongst the younger food handlers. The perception is vital, particularly with the Generation Y; in this study are those who just passed the secondary school. Personal strengths exhibit values in a manager. Higher leadership ratings, in general, convince their subordinates to function effectively in the food service. On the other side of the coin, the Holistic View is also able to bring significant effects in the foodservice industry. Precisely, the food handlers who have the holistic values tend to be inclined towards improved food performance. Nevertheless, activities of food handling do not bring any holistic effect on oneself although it was carried out in best practice. The practice of food-hygiene in the workplace did not contribute to the presence in soul holistic among the workers even they have been working full time. Contradicted result to Eliasi and Dwyer (2002), probably the food handlers who responded to this study is more concerned about food preparation, which requires more for human monitoring.

Future research should examine further Food-Hygiene Practices because of the insignificance to Holistic View. One of a possible area to look into is to retest the relationship using formative measures on Food-Hygiene Practice items. Besides, future study should also include other factors that contribute towards a Holistic View.

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